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THE BORDERLAND.

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

I step across the mystic borderland,
And look upon the wonder-world of Art—
How beautiful, how beautiful its hills!
And all its valleys, how surpassing fair!

The winding paths that lead up to the heights
Are polished by the footsteps of the great.
The mountain peaks stand very near to God:
The chosen few whose feet thereon have trod
Have talked with Him and with the angels walked.

Here are no sounds of discord, no profane
Or senseless gossip of unworthy things—
Only the songs of chisel and of pens,
Of busy brushes, and ecstatic strains
Of souls surcharged with music most divine.
Here is no idle sorrow, no poor grief
For any day or object left behind,
For time is counted precious, and herein
Is such complete abandonment of Self
That tears turn into rainbows, and enhance
The beauty of the land where all is fair.

Awed and afraid, I cross the borderland.
Oh, who am I, that I dare enter here
Where the great artists of the world have trod,
The genius-crowned aristocrats of Earth?
Only the singer of a little song;
Yet loving Art with such a mighty love
I hold it greater to have won a place
Just on the far land's edge, to make my grave,
Than in the outer world of greed and gain
To sit upon a royal throne and reign.

(The Chicago American.)